



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/036,765	12/21/2001	Michael Edward Lacefield	655.00939	4771
7590	11/24/2003			
WOOD, PHILLIPS, VAN SANTEN, CLARK & MORTIMER 500 WEST MADISON STREET, SUITE 3800 CHICAGO, IL 60661			EXAMINER JOYCE, HAROLD	
			ART UNIT 3749	PAPER NUMBER
			DATE MAILED: 11/24/2003	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/036,765

Applicant(s)

LACEFIELD, MICHAEL EDWARD

Examiner

Harold Joyce

Art Unit

3749

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 June 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 and 39-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 9-27, 36 and 42-49 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 28-33, 39 and 40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7, 8, 34, 35 and 41 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

DETAILED ACTION

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In claim 1, lines 9 and 10, said second and third doors each does not control the airflow to both said second and third outlets (see applicant's specification, page 8, starting at line 12).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 3, 6 and 28-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sutoh et al. The recitations regarding the labeling of the outlets are considered, in absence of a statement regarding criticality or new and unexpected results, a matter of mere engineering design choice and therefore obvious depending upon criteria such as the mere choice of the placement of the defrost, panel outlets, etc. and the like within the vehicle. For example, the term "defrost" outlet provides no additional limitation because no structure can be gleaned from the term. That is to say, the recitation of "defrost" only relates to the manner that the outlet is intended to be deployed which

does not differentiate the claimed outlet from the outlet of Sutoh et al. As to claim 6, it is a matter of design choice for the lower air and defroster outlet to be separated by a single wall rather than the two walls as shown in Figures 1 and 3.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 4, 5, 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Sutoh et al.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claims 7, 8, 34, 35 and 41 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Claims 9-27, 36 and 42-49 are allowed.

***Claim Informalities***

8. Claim 39 has an informality in that "including" in line 7 inherently should be deleted. Appropriate correction should be made.

***Response to Arguments***

9. Applicant's arguments filed June 30, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. As to applicant's argument as they apply to claim 4, a defroster outlet is a panel outlet.

10. As to applicant's argument as they apply to claims 39 and 40, the position of the door 27 will inherently change the flow through the outlet 24 when the door 28 is in a non-closed position.

11. As to applicant's argument as they apply to claim 28, see the above rejection. Additionally, the structure claimed is the same as the structure of Sutoh et al; hence, one cannot distinguish over the prior art by claiming the same element as the prior art.

***Conclusion***

12. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harold Joyce whose telephone number is (703) 308-0274. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

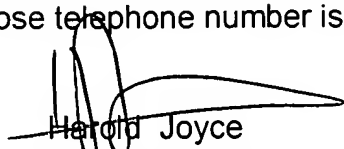
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ira Lazarus can be reached on (703) 308-1935. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9302.

Application/Control Number: 10/036,765

Page 5

Art Unit: 3749

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0861.



Harold Joyce  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3749